

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 6, 2005

The Honorable Rob Portman
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Portman:

We write to express our frustration with the continued impasse in negotiations with Japan regarding the resumption of United States beef exports to that nation. It is now clear that Japan is simply using this issue to maintain an unwarranted and unjustified trade barrier. Thus, we must request that you employ retaliatory economic measures against Japan.

Since signing a mutual agreement to resume the beef trade with Japan in October 2004, we have appreciated USTR's and USDA's tireless work in concert with President George W. Bush, other cabinet agencies and officials, and U.S. Congress to restore regular beef trade with Japan. Additionally, we appreciate the hard work that the USDA has done to implement substantive improvements in our ability to prevent, identify and respond to Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in the U.S. Despite these efforts, the Japanese government has failed to match these standards with prudent efforts to change their policy.

The Japanese Food Safety Commission (FSC) and others within the government have repeatedly demanded excessive documentation and paperwork with little or no justification. None of these requests reflect the internationally accepted phytosanitary guidelines on BSE. Rather, they appear to be a dilatory tool to prevent any effort to resume the purchase of American beef. Furthermore, after 20 confirmed cases of BSE in Japan, recent claims by the FSC that U.S. beef is not as safe as Japanese beef simply are an insult to American producers.

The beef industry loses \$100 million each month that the Japanese market remains closed. On behalf of the farmers, ranchers, and communities that comprise the American beef industry, we respectfully ask you to employ economic sanctions on the import of Japanese goods into the U.S. at a level comparable to the losses incurred by the beef industry.

We regret that negotiations have deteriorated to the point where we must make this request. However, the Japanese government must understand that the American beef industry and government cannot continue to stand idly by, while Japan builds road block after road block to

U.S. beef. We thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this request, and we look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Pat Roberts

Ken Salazar

Byron L. Dorgan

Sam Brownback

Frank Lott

Jim Talent

Michael B. Enzi

Ken Calvert

Norm Coleman

Eric Johnson

Wayne Allard

Mike Crapo

John V. Chafee

John Chafee

Art Bond

Lee Ling

John Corry

Craig Thomas

Tony Bailey Hutchison

Max Buncos

Sam Buntack